

steamers and the passengers were drowned  
by the scores,  
we should have notified Germany that as a  
neutral power  
and a signatory of The Hague Conventions we  
would decline  
longer to tolerate a return to the crimes of  
warfare which  
we had supposed outgrown since the days of  
the sacks of  
Drogheda and Magdeburg; and then of course,  
if Germany  
refused at once to yield to the protest, we  
should have made  
our words good by actions. But inasmuch as I  
cannot act  
and as my aim is to get my fellow-countrymen  
into the  
proper mental attitude, I continually strive to  
keep myself  
in such shape that I won't alienate good  
uninformed people  
of slightly timid or sluggish mind, who simply  
are utterly  
unable to face the new questions. These  
people I would  
tend to lose by a proper violence of  
statement!"

The news of the sinking of the *Liisitania* on  
May 7,  
1915, reached Eoosevelt while he was engaged  
in the Barnes  
trial at Syracuse. The news came to him first  
in the court  
room and was in the form of a telegram saying  
merely that  
the *Lusitcmia* had been sunk by a submarine,  
giving no de-  
tails. He was visibly disturbed by it, and, on  
the adjourn-  
ment of the court, he went to the house of his  
friend, Horace\*  
Wilkinson, whose guest he was during the  
trial. To com-  
prehend fully the courage of his subsequent  
deliverance it  
is necessary to take into account the situation  
at the mo-  
ment. As I have said in the preceding chapter,  
the testi-  
mony in the suit was practically all in and the  
case was

ready for submission to the jury. In the opinion of Eoosevelt's counsel, the jury was an assured unit for a verdict in his favor. There were two, possibly three, men of German birth upon it. During the trial Eoosevelt had received evidence of a growing German antagonism to him in the country. Several photographs of himself, with his autograph, that he had sent to German admirers, had been returned to him with bitter words of repudiation because of his condemnation of Germany for sinking with submarines American merchant vessels. If he were to denounce Germany anew for the *Lusitania* sinking, the chances were strong